

Your Health Matters

IMPORTANT NEWS ABOUT OPEN ENROLLMENT 2004

Introducing Arizona Benefit Options



With rising health care and insurance costs, benefits have become a concern and priority in all of our lives. Employees are worried about rising costs, quality of care, and lack of choices. With these concerns and many others in mind, the State of Arizona and the Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA) have been working on the development of a new comprehensive benefits package; a program that is designed **by** and designed **for** State employees. It is with great excitement that we are pleased to announce the new Arizona Benefit Options (AzBO) program. It provides a “one-stop shop” for all of your benefit needs. Benefit Options will include benefits such as medical, dental, and wellness. Though there are even more benefits planned for this program, the initial design will encompass these components. But the bottom line is we have a new program; a program that is about choice, about value, and about you!

The former Saguaro Program has been replaced with this comprehensive Benefit Options program. The new name and design reflect our focus and dedication to providing the most comprehensive and best available benefits for employees, retirees, and their families. It will still be part of ADOA and you can still call the Benefits Office with any questions or concerns; they stand ready to assist you. You can also access information on the dedicated website at www.benefitoptions.az.gov.

Much of the program will be familiar to you; yet other parts will be a little different. And, though the program is self-funded, it will operate very similarly to what we have now. The self-insurance concept, the way the program is funded, is utilized by the majority of states within the U.S. The main difference for us is that we will now have improved choices and more control over skyrocketing health care costs. With Open Enrollment fast approaching, we wanted to give you a sneak peek at this exciting new program.

It's About Choice...

The new AzBO program will continue to offer the current dental and vision choices. There will be important and exciting changes to the medical insurance program. Employees and retirees will now have a wider variety of physicians and providers; more than ever before! There will also be an increase in the number of plans from which you may choose. Improved pharmacy options will also be featured. **In the next issue of Your Health Matters newsletter, we will provide more details about these choices. The exact providers and doctors are currently being determined, and, as soon as we know, we will let you know!**

It's About Value...

Health care and insurance coverage are some of the most important investments we can make for our families and ourselves. AzBO will ensure you receive excellent value for your hard-earned money. Although exact premium amounts are still being negotiated, ADOA is fighting to keep your costs low. We will continue to strive to provide the best available health care for the lowest cost possible. By utilizing different funding methods than previously used, we are ensuring that our program will continue to improve, grow, and provide even more benefits for employees, retirees, and their families. **In the next issue of Your Health Matters newsletter, we will provide more specific details about costs.**

It's About YOU!

Employees are the State's most important resource. You are a vital link in the outstanding service our State provides to its citizens. It is because of you and this administration's dedication to providing a more comprehensive benefits package that Arizona Benefit Options was designed. We are already looking toward the future at additional benefit options we can offer employees to enhance the quality of their lives as valued members of our team.



True or False – Test Your Knowledge!

That rumor mill is working overtime! Here's your chance to test whether you are a victim of the mill or "someone in the know."

Self insurance means that I will have to find my own insurance.

FALSE – The State will continue to offer a comprehensive benefits program. In fact, the new Arizona Benefit Options program offers more choices and covers more for you than ever before!

State employees are joining AHCCCS.

FALSE – Employees at AHCCCS assisted with the initial exploration and consulted on the design of the new program. Arizona Benefit Options has no affiliation with AHCCCS whatsoever.

The State will start checking into my health records!

FALSE – State and Federal laws limit the ways medical records can be accessed or distributed. Personal information and records will remain as protected and confidential as they are under our existing program. What's "your business" stays "your business!"

Our medical benefits are going to be cut!

FALSE – At an absolute minimum they will be the same; in the majority of cases, they will be far better! We know for a fact that there will be a wider variety of choices and options available!

Transition of Care

ADOA has contracted with an independent nurse case management organization to assist members, under active medical treatment, who may need to transition to a new provider. Additional details on transition of care will be provided in the next newsletter and in Open Enrollment packets.

It's a Date!

Important Dates:

July - 2nd Issue of Your Health Matters Newsletter
Open Enrollment – August 2, 2004 through
September 10, 2004

Are You Up to Date?

Does the Benefits Office have your most recent address? If this newsletter was forwarded to you – chances are they don't. This upcoming Open Enrollment requires EVERYONE to re-enroll; so we need to know where you are! Address change requests should include: your full name, your Employee Identification Number (EIN), your correct street address, your correct city, state and zip code, your county of residency, and your agency. Address changes may be mailed or delivered to the AzBO Office, 100 N. 15th Avenue, Suite 103, Phoenix, AZ 85007 or faxed to 602.542.4048. Mailed, delivered and faxed requests must be signed by the employee. You may also email address changes to oeaddchanges@ad.state.az.us. Be sure to include all of the requested information in your email. Remember to also update this information with your retirement system.

EIN Is VIP!

This year's Open Enrollment will utilize your new Employee Identification Number (EIN) – NOT your social security number! You can find this number below your name on your payroll check. If you need assistance, then contact your supervisor or payroll coordinator immediately. Write it down and keep it in a safe place so that you will have it for Open Enrollment.

Paperless Process

The Open Enrollment process will be completely paperless via the Arizona Benefits web site or the interactive voice response telephone system. The web site and telephone system will be activated on August 2, 2004, the first day of Open Enrollment.

Additional information on the new Benefit Options can be obtained on the web site www.benefitoptions.az.gov or by calling the ADOA Benefit Options Call Center at 602.542.5008 or toll free at 1.800.304.3687, then select Option 1.

www.benefitoptions.az.gov

Forwarding Address Requested

Important News About Open Enrollment!

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